

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15 /064 W
-----115828 162328Z /66

P R 161737Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8260
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 3300

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, EC
SUBJECT: SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL INSCRIBES CFP ROLDOS/
HURTADO TICKET

REF: QUITO 3237;

1. ON MAY 16 OSVALDO HURTADO, VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF THE DISQUALIFIED POPULAR DEMOCRACY (DP) PARTY, FORMALLY JOINED THE CONCENTRATION OF POPULAR FORCES (CFP) PARTY OF HIS PRESIDENTIAL RUNNING MATE, JAIME ROLDOS. THE CFP IMMEDIATELY MOVED TO PRESENT THE ROLDOS/HURTADO TICKET TO THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL (SET) WHICH, IN THE EVENING OF MAY 15, FORMALLY INSCRIBED THE SLATE.

2. IN THE FACE OF CRITICISM FROM WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC COMPONENT OF THE DP, HURTADO TOOK PAINS TO INDICATE THAT HIS AFFILIATION WITH THE CFP WAS ONLY TEMPORARY AND THAT EFFORTS WOULD CONTINUE TO ACHIEVE FORMAL RECOGNITION FOR THE DP. HE INSISTED THAT THE MOVE WAS POLITICALLY NECESSARY TO FOIL THE GOE'S DISQUALIFICATION (THROUGH THE SET) OF THE DP ON POLITICAL RATHER THAN LEGAL GROUNDS.

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3. COMMENT: WITH THE RECOGNITION OF THE CFP TICKET, THE FINAL ELECTORAL CONTEST IS NOW BETWEEN SIX FORMALLY RECOGNIZED TICKETS. BY AFFILIATION WITH THE CFP IN ORDER TO CONTINUE THE CAMPAIGN, HURTADO AND THE DP APPEAR TO HAVE OUTFLANKED THE APPARENT GOE EFFORTS TO DISQUALIFY HIM. MANY POLITICALLY ASTUTE OBSERVERS WERE CONVINCED THAT HURTADO WOULD STICK BY HIS PRINCIPLES AND NOT FORMALLY

DISAFFILIATE FROM THE DP TO RUN (HURTADO HIMSELF HAD PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED THIS INCLINATION). IF THE GOE AND SET SHARED THIS VIEW, THEY WERE SURPRISED AND OUT-MANUEVERED AT THE LAST MOMENT. TO HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY FAILED TO ACCEPT HURTADO AS THE CFP CANDIDATE IN THE ABSENCE OF SPECIFIC LEGAL PROHIBITIONS WOULD HAVE CERTAINLY REINFORCED THE VIEW THAT THE SET HAD DISQUALIFIED HURTADO AND THE DP FOR POLITICAL REASONS.

4. IT IS UNCERTAIN WHAT ELECTORAL CONSEQUENCE, IF ANY, THE DISQUALIFICATION OF THE DP, FOLLOWED BY THE AFFILIATION OF ITS CANDIDATES WITH THE CFP, WILL HAVE. THE END RESULT OF THE APPARENT GOE EFFORTS TO BLOCK HURTADO, AND THUS WEAKEN ROLDOS' POSSIBILITIES AND THE POTENTIAL INFLUENCE OF ASSAD BUCARAM ON THE NEXT GOVERNMENT, MAY HAVE BEEN TO STRENGTHEN THE CFP'S CHANCES.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION CANDIDATES, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978QUITO03300
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780207-0112
Format: TEL
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780554/aaaabtmc.tel
Line Count: 79
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 47493e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 78 QUITO 3237
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2677776
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL INSCRIBES CFP ROLDOS/ HURTADO TICKET
TAGS: PINT, EC, (HURTADO, OSVALDO), (ROLDOS, JAIME)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/47493e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014